Inclination for Basic Sciences

2049. SHRI RAJA RAMANNA : Will the MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that many students are now not opting for basic sciences and this could lead to deterioration in improving the technology eventually; and

(b) whether it has been suggested that a scheme be worked out whereby gifted students are selected and given scholarships to continue their studies of basic sciences and their progress is watched, so that they can be provided suitable positions in the national labs and other scientific institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA) : (a) and (b) There is no report about students not opting science courses at Senior Secondary stage. However, to encourage students to continue their education in basic sciences at higher education level, a scheme called Kishore Vaigyanik Prothsahan Yojana (KVPY) has been launched during 1999-2000 by Department of Science and Technology which targets the young science students at the school and college level. It aims to encourage the students of basic sciences, engineering and medicine to take up research career in these areas. The KVPY strives to assist carefully selected students to realise their potential and to ensure that the best scientific talent is tapped for R&D in the country. These students are provided scholarships (upto pre-Ph.D. level). The Government has awarded 80 fellowships during 1999-2000 and 86 fellowships during 2000-2001. The proposal for providing suitable positions in national labs and academic institutions to these fellows is currently under discussion.

National Policy for Empowerment of Women

2050. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN : Will the MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that workplace is no cakewalk for women, and the NDA Government's latest National Policy for Empowerment of Women notwithstanding, India's huge female work force continues to receive a raw deal across the country;